

Deputy couple, Austin woman arrested when ISP finds working meth lab

Written by Marty Randall

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A Deputy couple and an Austin woman were arrested and charged in connection with what the Indiana State Police (ISP) are identifying as an active methamphetamine (meth) lab in the couple's home on East Peacock Road.

Trooper Mark LaMaster of the ISP Sellersburg post received an anonymous tip about possible drug activity at the mobile home of Claude Hamblin, 29, and Kimberly Hamblin, 30 on Thursday, March 10. He and several other officers went to the home that afternoon. As Trp. LaMaster arrived, Claude Hamblin walked out of the residence. Several people were inside the trailer.

After he had Hamblin surrender a handgun the man was carrying in a holster and sign a consent-to-search form, Trp. LaMaster and fellow officers entered the couple's mobile home. The state policeman said Hamblin showed them where he had "...items of contraband."

A meth lab was located in a bathroom, the probable cause affidavit noted. Claude Hamblin also allegedly explained to the officers how he had been manufacturing meth using a "shake and bake" method in which lye is mixed with other chemicals to create anhydrous ammonia, one of meth's ingredients.

The affidavit stated that Hamblin "...admitted he had been manufacturing methamphetamine to provide it to other people, and that he had provided it to other people."

Hamblin's wife, Kimberly, arrived while officers were at the trailer. She and her husband allegedly admitted she was using meth regularly.

An ISP clandestine lab team member was dispatched to the scene by the Sellersburg post. She identified what had been found as an active meth lab and listed materials found as paraphernalia, pseudoephedrine, ammonium nitrate, sodium hydroxide, organic solvents, lithium, sulfuric acid and hydrochloric acid.

The Hamblins are each charged in Scott Circuit Court with dealing in methamphetamine, a Class B felony and two Class D felonies of possession of precursors and maintaining a common nuisance.

A friend who was present at the home, Patricia Artressia who is also known as Patricia White, 25, Austin, was charged with maintaining a common nuisance, a Class D felony, and visiting a common nuisance, a Class B misdemeanor. Her charges were filed in Superior Court.

Jury trial dates of July 11 were scheduled for the Hamblins by Judge Roger Duvall in Circuit Court. Public defenders were assigned to the cases, and their bonds, which were set initially at \$75,000 corporate surety or full cash, can now be posted at 10% cash. The couple remains incarcerated at the Scott County Security Center.

Artressia will go to trial on June 9, according to court information. Her bail was set at \$15,000/10% cash, and a public defender was appointed for her.

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